

Establishing Your Telemedicine Practice

Overview

In addition to the logistical details of setting up a telemedicine practice, it is important to consider several key elements when developing a telemedicine program. Here are five items that are important to determine prior to the first patient appointment.

Tips for Developing a Telemedicine Program

Determine the Client Population

- Telemedicine appointments can be booked as follow-ups for current patients.
- In order to grow the patient base, new patients can have their initial consultation via telemedicine.
- Contractual relationships with specific sites or programs can be fulfilled via telemedicine, thereby limiting costly travel.



Identify How Referrals will be Received

- Modify referral forms to include and advertise telemedicine services.
- Determine what additional tests or information are required in order to conduct an efficient telemedicine consultation.
- Recognize and outline the timelines that are necessary for the information to be at the consultant site prior to the telemedicine event.



Determine Patient Support for Telemedicine Consultations

- A family support person may be sufficient for your telemedicine service.
- If a health care provider is required, identify if a specific skill-set is needed (e.g. Rheumatology needs either an OT or PT to conduct an appropriate joint assessment).
- Ensure your telemedicine clinical protocol is up to date and identifies the requirements for patient support.



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Tips for Developing a Telemedicine Program

Establish the Scheduling Structure for Clinics

- Clinics could be “one offs” that fit into the existing schedule as required.
- Clinics can be scheduled in blocks with one specific site.
- Clinics can be blocked to multiple sites one after another.



Identify a Support Person for the Telemedicine Program

- Outline their job duties and role (scheduling clinics, verifying appointments, supporting patients during telemedicine events, etc).
- Identify training requirements (for both the support person and the consultant).

